The COMMONWEAL

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The Miners' Strike

THE ISSUE of the captive mine strike is directly the closed shop. Whatever other issues come in depend completely on that. As things are now, we believe it is proper to accept the almost universal judgment of labor union people that some kind of closed shop is for the common good in industries where union organization has developed broadly and powerfully. We accept this from labor tutelage, but do so reluctantly, being impressed also by the many vociferous arguments against the closed shop. As has been frequently stated in these pages, there are reforms in labor union organization which seem desirable and pressing. These are mostly internal reforms, but reforms which could be pushed and even legislated by public opinion and authority. The internal democracy of unions could be helped by better charters; standards could be set by the state before granting or recognizing the validity of charters. The unions ought to give public financial accountings, as some already do. Members ought not be forced, as it were, to marry a union for life; unions might have more the character of political parties, with workers free to choose or build another. And so forth, etc.—everybody has ideas about the ideal union.

The right to strike is almost universally accepted. We accept the common tradition of American strikes. Again, along with nearly everyone, we are critical about the ordinary functioning of strikes. There is too much reliance on force by the unions and not enough on education—this being especially true in organizational drives. The accepted manner of policing strikes by the states and by both sides brings what appears to us unjustified violence, too much passion and too little reason. Strikes and lockouts are resorted to more lightly than they should be, and too frequently there is a quantity and quality of jockeying and finagling going on behind the strikes that has too little to do with legitimate reasons for strikes.

Regarding the present emergency, people will differ according to their conception of proper foreign policy. Some observations hold anyway. Whether it is a war emergency or a defense emergency or any lesser or greater kind, it is not exclusively a coal mining emergency. For production and national strength, the unity of the people and the feeling by workers and their leaders that they are getting a square deal is enormously important. It is personal and psychological as well as mechanical. It is observable that there threatens a grim, if typical convergence of the war and the reactionary trends. There is no automatic redressing of social forces after a war emergency. It would be imprudent to sacrifice social betterment for the sake of the emergency with the blind optimism that all would be recovered with slight effort after the war. The sacrifices made to the emergency must be regulated according to the best thought about the relative rights and duties of the various groups involved. States wage wars according to the way they are, and the way, with accelerated speed, they are becoming in the course of the war. The relative position of social forces is not miraculously altered by war and then miraculously set back the way it was.

It is hard to know what alternative solutions to the captive coal strike are in fact open, or the forces pushing in the various directions. Leaders of the steel industry, John L. Lewis, and the President are all most able leaders in the work to be done, and we don't know where they will end up. On the face of it, there seem to be three choices open: that the strike should be beaten down and the captive coal industry (and other sections of industry following that lead) should be run in fairly reactionary fashion by the business management alone; that the strike should be won by the union, and, there and elsewhere, industry should be run more on the basis of divided control shared by the labor and company management; that the federal government should abolish the dispute by taking over the management for itself. We fail to see the validity of the argument so widely presented, and subscribed to even by the *New Leader,* the organ of the Social Democratic Federation, to the effect that John L. Lewis is contending that "the government must help him organize the remaining five percent of the

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workers involved." As we see it, Lewis feels perfectly able to organize them himself, if he is permitted to have his strike without federal interference. The principal worry about "a government-made and government-controlled labor movement" rather seems to arise from the possibilities that the government will break the strike or take over the companies itself. Perhaps if the captive mines alone were struck, the steel companies could turn out their products by buying coal from other mines, at their expense and bother, which they would be almost mortally eager to avoid, but without a breakdown in the production the government insists upon getting. But of the three apparent alternatives, winning the closed shop for the union—a solution leaving control of the industry shared by labor and business management—appears least dangerous. This with the hope and prayer that labor and capital can cooperate and not only fight; that they both can sacrifice some immediate advantages to the common good, which the emergency makes us see is dramatically important, even though the emergency does not change its character.

The Confraternity at Philadelphia

THE CONFRATERNITY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE has had a development so rapid and impressive as to seem almost miraculous. Its origins as an agency of the universal Church go back to the Counter Reformation. Its earliest honor-roll has such saintly clerics as Charles Borromeo, Robert Bellarmine and Francis de Sales, although it is characteristic of its spirit and its deliberate intention that the laity has always functioned prominently in it. The remarks of the Reverend Augustine S. Hargedon of Boston at the seventh National Congress of the Confraternity at Philadelphia are along the line of this tradition: "If every Catholic had an intelligent grasp of Christian principles and a live interest in his religion it would be impossible to suppress Christianity in the worst Godless state. One real need of our times is an articulate Catholic laity."

Item: Financing the War

ONE MAN says we must pay for the war as we go: pay as you enter, pay as you leave—no credit. To which admirably honest sentiments reply may be made: a child born inherits wealth or poverty, security or fear; a man living is a link in the chain which stretches throughout all time behind and ahead of him; the war is not the affair of one generation either in its causes or in its effects. Which, painfully, is no theoretical affirmation. Another man says we must know the worst, they should tell us about it, tell us what taxation to expect during the next few years. That is the least "they" can do, for how can we plan how to live? To this man trusting in the power of human foresight reply may be made: no calculating machines can estimate the cost, nor any planning foretell the strain of a war which is to emphasize the truth that we live, uncertain, in what is, certainly, a world revolution. And a third man says it will cost too much, the cost will ruin the system under which we live. It will indeed.

The fact that the financing of this war—these wars, these indeterminable years of war—cannot be accomplished by any orthodox traditional means available to a liberal economy is but one more indication, among many, that the system we have known and considered normal is coming to an end.

Starvation in Conquered Europe

SECRETARY MORGENTHAU'S words to our National Grange on the millions of people we shall feed *after the war* must be consoling to the starving human multitudes in the conquered countries. Even Americans shielded by distance and their own distractions from this harrowing spectacle should be startled to think of this ruthless blockade in terms of its probable duration. Current opinion is that the US cannot begin an effective military offensive for at least two years, while Hitler's defeat may take five. How many defenseless women and children and unemployed men in the conquered countries will still be alive for the American farmer to feed by then? The need is urgent and immediate. We have referred more than once to the competently drawn up Hoover plan which would relieve much of this human misery without risking enough German confiscation to play a material part in victory or defeat. Starvation of the helpless and the innocent on so large a scale is so great an evil that it is not a legitimate weapon under any circumstances. So true is this that even if feeding the helpless Belgians, Poles, Frenchmen, Greeks and others proved to be of some help to Germany, it would still be the duty of the United States, with huge surpluses and available carriers, to carry out this work. But according to recent reports such is not the case. Not only would the Hoover plan or some modification thereof be designed to prevent any sizable seizures, but current reports from Germany are to the effect that after two years of blockade the German people are comparatively well fed. In another year they should have additional supplies from Russia and the conquered Balkans, so that from the point of view of food, the blockade of Germany and the territories she has conquered will be even less important as a factor in eventual German defeat. On the other hand the conquered peoples who do succeed in surviving will suffer the effects of their deprivations for a generation. When will the nation awake to its responsibility for sending the food and medicines that are so urgently needed?

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The Bonfires

By **Albert Eisele**

OLD HANK was sitting in a poolroom when a farmer opened the door, thrust in his head and said, "Anybody here want to husk corn?"

"Here!" cried Old Hank, and arose. Several other applicants also got up farther down the line of chairs, but the farmer, after looking them all over with a quick and keen survey, said to Old Hank, "Five cents a bushel and about five weeks' work?"

"Suits me," said Old Hank. "I can begin right away."

He went out to the farm, ate a good dinner, then set to work. He had been given a good team and wagon, and the corn was an excellent crop: the ears were large and firm and felt exhilarating to the hand. It was the first husking of the year for Old Hank, and it was heartwarming to renew acquaintance with the feel of good corn. The day was warm. It was in mid-October and the husking season was just beginning. Occasional cornstalks were still green—the green of peas—and smelled like cured fodder. Gossamers were everywhere: in the cornfield, where they lay as a fragile network upon the tassels, and on the plowed ground, where they hung from clod to clod.

By early evening Old Hank had gathered his first load. He drove home and unloaded it. The farmer, a young man named Burton Smith, was still in the field, plowing, and so Old Hank went for the cows. It was after sundown then, and in the pasture lane the gossamers floated face-high from the fence posts. But Old Hank didn't mind. He would help with the chores, for he felt grateful to Burton (in his mind he was already calling him by his first name) for having chosen him from among the several who had offered themselves there in the poolroom. For Old Hank was no longer young. He was fifty. Burton might have chosen a younger man.

Old Hank husked steadily, and alone, during the remainder of October. By the end of the month Burton had finished all his other work and he, too, husked. The two, working together for a week, finished the first field, of thirty-two acres. They moved into the second and final field, of forty acres. Old Hank, who had worked three weeks in the first field, found it strongly exciting to move into this new environment.

Then the weather changed; there was mist and rain, and for a whole week the husking wagons stood silent. Old Hank, though he did not husk, ate three good meals a day, and this board-and-keep he tried to earn by helping with the chores and doing odd jobs whenever the weather permitted. He split wood, mended fences, cleaned the stables. He liked Burton, and he had a great respect for the latter's wife, Clara. The Burtons were businesslike, but they were considerate. He had never worked at a better place.

And then there was Betty, the couple's little daughter. Betty was only four, but she had taken a great liking to Old Hank. And Old Hank returned the affection. Whenever he found a red ear he always brought it to her, and he brought her bright-colored empty shotgun shells, dropped in the cornfields by pheasant hunters. Once he brought home a large cluster of reddish corn shucks which he claimed to have plucked off an Indian's headdress, a tale to which Betty listened with widened eyes. To the little girl it made no difference that Old Hank was just a farm hand, a transient, booted from one job to another, from one state to another, as work offered. Children, Old Hank told himself, asked a lot of questions, but they never asked the questions that hurt. God bless children!

The men set to work again. The rains had stopped, but the cornfields were seas of mud. The wagon wheels picked up layer on layer of weeds and litter until all the spokes were hidden and each wheel looked like the decorated wheel of a parade float. The two husking wagons, as they came up from the fields and swung around the barns, seemed to be heading a gaudy Fourth of July parade. For almost a week the fields remained heavy; then they dried, but new rain fell, and the wagons again stood empty and silent.

"It just seems like we'll never get done husking," complained Burton. "I'm beginning to get tired of it."

Tiring

Old Hank, too, was beginning to get tired of husking. Of course he was earning money: he was earning around four dollars daily, but even so, he was more and more looking forward to the day when they would finish. He was beginning to get tired of all this early rising, tired of the chill winds at dawn, tired of the frosted cornfields, tired of the painfully-fissured fingers, tired of the sleep that was always being broken into by

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the crowing roosters. He was thinking less and less of the money he was earning and more and more of that happy day when he could husk the last ear, hang his hook on the wagon, and then take a deep breath while his breast filled with the satisfaction and happiness of a huge task completed.

He remembered how it used to be when he was still a small boy and at home. His father had a large farm. The husking lasted for weeks, and it was always such a joyous day when the long grind was ended. Sometimes snow caught them, but if not too deep they worked on in the snow, with wet mittens and wet overalls, and it was then that the completed harvest brought song to the heart. Somewhere, in his limited reading, Old Hank had read how European peasants celebrated at the close of the grape-gathering, how they danced, and built merry bonfires, and discharged firearms. Well, that was how they used to feel at home when the last of the corn had been gathered in.

The skies cleared, and the men returned to work. Then the weather changed; the wind shifted northward to an intercardinal point, and mornings the husking wagons rattled prodigiously as they went afield over the frozen ground. The cornfields by now were weatherbeaten; there no longer were stalks the green of peas and that smelled like cured fodder. Many of the tassels had buckled and fallen to earth, where they now lay like so many prairie chickens slaughtered in sport. Thanksgiving Day came and went.

Then it was December. Old John Welko, a neighbor, finished husking and began praying for snow. The Welkos were a selfish and narrow family, and it pleased them to see their neighbors get caught with corn in the field. If the Welkos finished their husking on Monday, then that evening the father always called the family together in prayers for snow.

The cold grew more severe, and Old Hank had to put on two overalls. He looked forward to the day when they would finish—like a horse stretching its neck over a fence at grain, so did Old Hank stretch his gaze forward to the finishingday. He counted the remaining rows, and then figured, with astronomical certainty, the day when they would finish. One could always figure out how long it would take to do work that went by rows. They always knew at home: for there the boys—there were two others besides Old Hank—did the husking while their father counted the rows and kept them appraised. Sunday afternoons was always the time when their father made his reckonings. "Ninety-six rows left!" he would announce, as he returned from the field, "—just exactly two and a half days' work! We'll be through by Wednesday noon!"

Those happy finishing-days of his youth came back to him vividly. He wondered why this should be, this nostalgia. Since those days he had drifted far from family ties. Perhaps it was because there seemed to be something about husking sunsets that brought on nostalgia, that made the heart wince with pain. At the close of day, if the work brought pain to the hands, and to the feet, then the sunsets might also bring pain to the heart. The husking sunsets were not only always beautiful, but one could not escape them. One husked till nightfall, and there the picture hung. There before the eyes it hung, with all its changing hues and lights and shades, with all its changing beauty. Sometimes there was a lone cloud that looked like a rosy ostrich plume. Sometimes there was a huge hay-barn burning. Again there was a great dark dome of clouds overhead, supported and filigreed in the west by the slender pillars of farmplace trees, and with a vivid ribbon of orange far beyond.

Those finishing-days had been such happy ones for two reasons, first, because of a harvest completed, and second, that the winter ahead lay as a period of comparative ease. Corn was the final crop of the year, and when it had been gathered in, the days of relaxation began. There was longer and sounder sleeping; afternoons one could go to town and play pool or cards; there was always a farm sale somewhere if one felt that way; or, if the weather was bad, one could stay in the house, or tinker, or just sit and listen to the musical whistlings of the heating stove. When the blizzard had subsided there were rabbit hunts, with lusty stag suppers that evening in some neighborhood farm home, when the game would be fried in large pans and washed down with wild-grape wine. Of course there were also the winter chores, which could be disagreeable enough on occasion, but the tempo was leisurely and not, as in husking time, feverish, when the sun, no matter how beautifully it rose or set, was always the inexorable taskmaster.

The end

Of course, Old Hank understood how it all was in these, his later years. When the last of Burton's corn had been gathered in then he, Old Hank, could go. Old Hank understood that perfectly. That was the way it was in the world. When the factory ran out of orders, the worker was paid off and could go. On the farm it was the same way. As a matter of fact Old Hank took the situation for granted and gave it small thought. Anyway, his mind seemed filled with only one idea—to finish the husking. He thought of this morning and night, and he thought of it while he worked. Nothing else seemed to matter—nothing else seemed capable of gaining a foothold in his mental consciousness.

That, now, was the struggle—to bring in the

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last of the corn. The short December days passed swiftly, and at last the men came to the eve of that long-looked-for day of triumph. Only two loads of corn remained in the field, and the work would be completed by tomorrow noon.

In the morning Old Hank arose at the usual cockcrow. The stars were shining, and he could see that the world was white with frost. He fed the horses, harnessed them, and then began with the milking. Burton did not appear, and so Old Hank finished the milking and returned to the house. Breakfast was ready.

"Burton is not feeling well this morning," Clara explained. "I don't know whether he'll be able to husk or not. He's not up yet."

"I can finish it alone, I guess," said Old Hank. "But I'll have to husk all day."

He ate his breakfast, and went out. It was still dark, but the stars had disappeared and the sky was clouded over. He wondered if snow would fall at the eleventh hour and rob him of his victory. As yet the Welko family-prayers for snow had not been answered.

He drove out to the field. Daylight, retarded by the clouds, was breaking. The jolting husking wagon frightened pheasants up out of the frosty fence-rows.

He began to husk. The semi-darkness was irritating; it was hard to find the ears. Off to the south the Welkos' lamplight came on—the Welkos had long since finished husking and they arose late.

He husked the morning load, and went in to dinner. The skies remained clouded, and in the cornfield the frost was slow in dissolving. It was a murky, gloomy day; the horizons alternately lifted and darkened, and now and again receded into a cold steel-blue. The sound of illegal pheasant-shooting was in the air.

Burton came downstairs to dinner. He was feeling better. Only a single load was left in the field, and Old Hank said that he could get it.

Snow

The afternoon remained cool and gray. A stiff wind arose, a wind that was scented with snow. An ear of corn lay on the ground—Old Hank bent to pick it up, and he heard the wind moaning over the tops of the few tassels that remained unbroken. Somehow he had not been conscious of the wind's roar. It was only by bending down that he had recognized it. He recalled how, as a small boy, he used to see strange things by bending down and looking backwards through his legs.

The day wore on, and at last Old Hank had nearly finished. But as he neared the end of the last two rows a sudden exhaustion came over him. He became very weak, and the sweat broke out on his brow. He stumbled, and then fell into a clinch with a particularly sturdy hill of corn.

But he rallied, and soon was at the end of the rows. The task was done. The gray veils of a December dusk were beginning to be thrown about. In the orchard was an apple tree laden with unpicked apples, now frozen and yellow. The tree seemed hung with Christmas bells.

He did the chores. He went to the strawstack for bedding, and the disturbed sparrows flew from their cozy nests in the sides of the stack. He detected a nostalgic threshing-odor as he bedded the horses down.

Then they sat at supper.

"I'm feeling better," Burton announced. "I'll be all right tomorrow—then I can take you to town the first thing in the morning and pay you off."

"Yes," said Old Hank, and then winced. He had almost forgotten that as soon as the husking was finished he would have to go.

Supper over, he went upstairs to his room. Outside the north wind was rising. It was an old farmhouse, and the heavy wind whistled mournfully in the cracks where the storm windows fitted imperfectly. There would be snow on the ground by morning.

He should have been more of a clock-watcher. He should have had his ears cocked more sharply for the quitting whistle. He should have paid more heed to his pay-check. Instead, he had permitted himself to be drawn into the vortex of his work. He had forgotten all else save the urge to conquer.

But at least he had won the fight. The fruits of the victory itself could not be taken from him. The bonfires that burned in his heart were all his own.

He was very tired. He needed sleep. He would have to get up fairly early in the morning, to gather together his few belongings.

Many Are the Children of the Desolate

This was your travail: wave of human pity
On tide of human pain.
Torture has rent you; it will come again.

Here are your poor, sacrilege of a city,
Here are your workers on a barren hill:
Of these you suffered, and they claim you still.

Conceived in tears, they were brought forth in sadness,
Yet screen your sorrow when you bend above
These pale composite children of your love.

Let the thorns tear you, leading them to gladness;
Let the sun sear you, lifting them to good:
Try to be worthy of your motherhood.

JESSICA POWERS.

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French Army in Africa

Its makeup, officers, men, tradition, history.

By **J. Paar-Cabrera**

EARLY in 1914—a few months before the outbreak of the World War—I became a lieutenant *à état étranger,* or, literally speaking, "on the foreign plan," in the French Foreign Legion. Three weeks later I was with a mixed column, operating in Morocco.

Military aviation was in its infancy. There were no tanks, no flame throwers. The mechanisms of the machine guns easily went out of order. Consequently it was difficult to stop the enveloping tactics of the Moroccans, who invariably delivered their strongest attacks on the rear of the French columns. The French had adopted this system of combat: As soon as the scouting cavalry reported the approach of large tribal forces, the available infantry formed a wide square. The cavalry and the artillery placed themselves in the middle of the square. When the fire of the infantry and of the artillery broke the attack, the square opened and the cavalry became the spearhead of a decisive counter-attack and pursuit.

I was a Lieutenant of the Legion. But, in my first combat in one of these squares, I commanded a platoon of a squadron of *Chasseurs d'Afrique,* subbing for its subalterns, who had all been wounded during the previous week. That first fierce fight on a rocky plain surrounded by towering ranges is naturally carved in my memory.

The squadron, dismounted to offer a lesser target, was massed behind two companies of Tunisian Tirailleurs. The Tunisian Tirailleurs are the worst fighters of the French Colonial Army. But the two companies in question were commanded by Tunisian-born officers, sons of white colonists: sound, competent men, who knew how the minds and hearts of their charges clicked.

The Moroccans came on, crawling on their bellies, taking cover in gullies and behind boulders. Accustomed to the use of a gun from their early teens, and fearless, they were redoubtable adversaries. Tunisian Tirailleurs fell, dead and wounded. But every time the line-up of the two companies wavered, the voices of their commissioned officers and sergeants ran: "Rachid, you are not praying to Allah! Keep your head up and shoot straight!" . . . "Remember, men, that no wounded is ever left behind! But the first one who throws his gun down and leaves his place gets his skull blown off!"

The steadying detail stood ready, behind the line-up. It was composed of veteran Tirailleurs with wound stripes on their sleeves and medals pinned to their short jackets. And they meant business, with their rifles at the ready.

The Tunisians held on—for an hour—in spite of the fact that they were visibly afraid. Then their losses became too heavy. The fluctuations of their decimated array became so constant that my squadron leader ordered one Chasseur to stay back for every four horses, and all remaining Chasseurs ready to take the place of the Tunisians.

But the Commandant of the Tunisian companies was still unruffled. He was a tanned, bearded man, who kept his automatic holstered and held a walking stick in his hand. Suddenly his voice arose, loud, and derisive:

"The *ksouri* [the villagers] living near the farm where I was born, in the zone of Sousse, used to relate this tale of Si Mehmed [Si Mehmed, the fabulous wise jackal of Tunisian folklore].

"One day Si Mehmed saw an enormous lion charging at him. He turned to flee and realized that he was on the edge of a precipice; and, what was worse, a herd of smaller but very fast-moving lions leaped and bounded at the precipice's foot.

"A common jackal would have lost his head and gone down anyhow, hoping to elude the lions waiting below. But Si Mehmed was wise. He understood that to gallop down the very steep slope and to lose his balance were the same thing, and that to fall in a cloud of blinding dust in the middle of the young lions meant sure death.

"So, Si Mehmed gave a second and appraising glance at the charging lion and, by the Prophet, may Allah preserve always his name! he saw that that big lion had broken and blunt claws! And no longer teeth in his whitish gums! It was large and heavy, but old, and almost helpless!

"Si Mehmed didn't wait passively for its crushing impact. Instead, he sprang lithely, sidestepping it, bit its side and laughed when the toothless maws of the old lion clamped helplessly on his shoulder. Then Si Mehmed turned, bit the old lion between his eyes and forced it to release its hold. The old lion sat on its haunches and howled painfully.

"Si Mehmed laughed again—and sprang on a fat rabbit which had stupidly come out of its hole,

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hoping to see the death of Mehmed the shrewd.

"The next instant the old lion was gone, tail between its mangy hindquarters. And Si Mehmed had fat rabbit for dinner.

"Tirailleurs!

"The Moroccans, the accursed, are all around us. If you give way, they'll kill you to a man! They have better teeth than the old lion! Their teeth are their guns and bullets! But so have you. And the rest of the square is holding firmly. Fight the Moroccans, think that they'll be routed, and you'll have your fat rabbit—you'll take for your own whatever you'll find on the Moroccans killed by you!"

In a moment, the mood of the Tunisians changed. Forced peals of laughter broke out from among them. Their line stiffened, their firing became more accurate.

When the combat lost its crucial intensity, and it became evident that only stubborn fighting grit kept a couple of hundred Moroccans firing all around the square, the bearded commander bent sideways, digging the tip of his cane into the ground for support.

My squadron commander stared closely at him; then he swore and pointed at the ground under him.

A dark patch of gore was spreading over it. It was fed by blood, falling from under the tunic of the Tirailleur superior officer, who had been hit early in the combat, but had not mentioned it, had kept on encouraging his men until he felt sure that the Moroccan attack was broken.

When my cavalry captain sprang to support the falling Tirailleur Commandant, several Tunisians realized that their leader was severely injured. Questions and queries rang. Then their white colonist officers lost their tempers:

"Dibs! Dogs!" they roared. "The Moroccans killed your father-officer, your friend! Are you standing there like *geckos* (sand lizards) to see him die?"

The Tunisians—the cowards of the previous hour—became raging furies. Frenziedly and without waiting for orders, they catapulted on with fixed bayonets. A few minutes later they smashed a counter attack of the tribesmen confronting them and pursued them savagely.

I saw similar episodes time and again, in the long years that I spent in the French Colonial Army. And now I can confidently say: The Moroccan soldier is an unsurpassed fighter because he's an exceptional marksman, a tough hand-to-hand scrapper and a hardy man who doesn't know what fear is. But he's easily insulted, and vindictive.

The Algerian Tirailleur has tremendous endurance. He can march for an entire day with a fully loaded pack on his back, and take part in a combat thereafter without showing the least sign of weariness. But while the Berber Kabyle of Algeria is very brave, the average Berber-Semitic Algerian prefers sniping from a distance to out-and-out fighting.

The Tunisian, as told before, is lazy and cowardly but, when well commanded, he masters his fears and gives a good account of himself.

The African Negro—and that goes especially for the Senegalese Tirailleurs, of Ouoloff extraction, are good soldiers because they are docile, unafraid. But the Senegalese considers himself the equal of all good white men, and far better than many white men. When his ego is allowed to swell too much, he acquires something of that complex which induced the Roman Emperor Nero to say, when the rebellious Legions from Spain marched into Rome: "I'm too great a man to die! I should be preserved!"

Before and during the World War, all these different races serving in the French Army were excellently officered by subalterns and non-coms born in North Africa, but of European ancestry; by sons of immigrated colonists of French, Spanish and Italian extraction.

The late Marshal Lyautey used to say of these sons of European settlers: "Their knowledge of the ways of the natives is priceless, because they have assimilated it from childhood. In the native regiments, they constitute a human concrete, which keeps together men of antagonistic races and beliefs."

The secret documentary history of the World War, compiled by the French General Staff and kept in its archives, includes these passages: "Officers transferred to Moroccan battalions from Metropolitan regiments have been shot from behind, or from nearby positions. The Europeans of Africa [the sons of white colonists] know what to do with Moroccans. . . ."

"They [the sons of white colonists] are the leading spirit of the Algerian Tirailleurs. However, the greatest feather in their hat is their success in keeping in a combative mood the Tunisian Tirailleurs, most unsatisfactory soldiers of our colonial Empire. . . ."

In the last war

During the World War, the French people paid little attention to the white officers of the Colonial Regiments. Their gratitude, instead, was aroused by the exotic looking Moroccans, Algerians, Tunisians and Senegalese, who fought so bravely for *la belle France* against the invading Germans.

Thus the pro-native movement was born. It was rightfully and basically good. But it was one of those ideas which miscarry because they are not properly executed.

To begin with, it fast became a drive to elevate the natives at the expense of the white

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settlers. Therefore it degenerated into a racial struggle in which the white colonists blocked all provisions for the sake of retaining their jobs and the properties which they had carved out of the wilderness.

The Sabir, or town Arabs, reacted with strikes, mob attacks and out-and-out uprisings. The Ksouri, or native villagers, became unruly and refused to work with the white farmers. The nomads and semi-nomads of the interior were left to their own devices until, instead of being allowed to appoint their own chiefs, they were given veteran Arabian and Berber officers and non-commissioned officers as Caids and Sheiks, whenever one of their Caids or Sheiks died. This latter experiment didn't work so well because, while it established a network of reliable tribal commands, it placed in charge of the tribes soldiers who didn't always know thoroughly the tribes and their needs.

To make matters worse, it was the time when, by natural process of business, the industry and commerce of France had become centralized into cartels.

The trust system extended to North Africa. The colonists couldn't and wouldn't oppose it. The trusts didn't want the destruction of anybody. They considered the white settlers valuable and gave them jobs. But all the land became private property, and its products untouchable. Furthermore, the tenant-farmers couldn't hire as extra hands destitute individuals begging for a livelihood. And they couldn't distribute to stranded wayfarers excess foods which had ceased being their own.

Before and during the World War, nobody starved in Northern Africa. Fruits grew on the trees by the wayside. Green vegetables were for the taking in the open country all around towns and villages. Small game abounded, and nobody stopped those who hunted for it. The vegetation of the oases, their goat herds and the milk of their camel mares supplied the needs of the nomads. Thus Sabir, Ksouri and Bedouins could spend their lives without jobs, in idleness, and not starve.

Some hard working Berber races of North Africa—the Kabyles, for instance—crossed the sea regularly to seek employment as stevedores. As soon as they put together a few hundred francs, they returned to their native villages and squandered their hard-earned savings or gambled them away, but had a grand time in doing so. When they found no jobs in the ports of Southern France, they had their hills to return to. They plucked wild fruits, hunted, raised millet and olives and got along comfortably.

In 1919, I traveled extensively all over Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia in the pursuit of my anthropological studies. I found, everywhere, the natives split into numberless groups, factions, tribes and Moslem sects. In Morocco, there was trouble in the Chleu country, still fighting to preserve its independence. Life, though, went on forcedly-smoothly in the towns. In the hills, there were still bone or family disputes, and occasionally barouds, meaning literally gun-powder, and figuratively feud and combat. But French law was already clamping down the lid. In Algeria and Tunisia, bad feeling popped up occasionally, but the long French domination had stamped out the practice of the Baroud. However, squabbles or no squabbles, nobody starved in North Africa. Nature provided for every native not annexed into the job-dealing system of modern economics.

Still in the pursuit of my studies, I made a survey of French North Africa in 1923. The turmoil of a change was already in the offing in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. The camion and tourist routes through the desert were seizing on the living for the penniless nomad was in sight.

In the early thirties, the depression reached French Africa. The trusts retrenched or curtailed most of their operations. Countless sons and grandsons of white colonists were thus thrown out of jobs. In the following three or four years, hunger became widespread all over French North Africa. The foodstuffs provided by nature being available no longer, enormous columns of stranded men, women and children formed everywhere, marched on the nearest seats of the functionaries representing the French Government. But there was no relief whatsoever waiting for them.

In 1935, the crisis reached its peak. Revolts broke out everywhere. The Foreign Legion and the Senegalese kept the peace of France in Morocco. In Algeria and Tunisia, the native Tirailleurs showed signs of disaffection and were substituted by a large number of battalions of Negro soldiers imported from Senegal.

Provisions were taken to raise funds in the colonies. One of these was the increase of the head-tax paid by the natives of Mauritania. Many Mauritanian Moors refused to abide by it. As punishment, their livestock was seized.

The two chief peculiarities of the Mauritanian Moors, called also blue men because the indigo with which they dye their garments stains their bodies, are their aversion for bathing—they never do, as a matter of fact—and their milk diet, supplemented occasionally by a few vegetables. Consequentially, when they were deprived of their herds, the Moors of Mauretania were deprived also of their food. Savage hunger soon seized them. Out of desperation, hundreds of thousands of northern Mauritanians marched northward. Men, women and children crossed the sinister, rocky and foodless zone separating Mauritanian from Southern Morocco.

The authorities took notice of their plight. Tons of grain, idle in warehouses, were purchased

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from private concerns and shipped to southern Morocco. But, thoughtlessly, it was distributed unmilled in sacks to the ravenous Mauritanians, who were unaccustomed to the food and didn't know how to prepare it.

The result was a major tragedy, and reports claim a great many thousands of Mauritanians died. Besides private reports, the *Bulletin des Comités de l'Afrique Française* of the Société des Africanistes and other documents report the tragic situation of this part of North Africa at that crucial time.

Thus, before the second World War, French Africa had become a land of bitterly resentful races. And its conscripted troops had lost their fine white-colonist officers of the past. Because, as a result of their misery, many white colonists of French extraction had become radicals or pro-Fascists; the colonists of Spanish blood looked longingly to the land of their forefathers; and Italian fascist propaganda had made large inroads among the Algerians and Tunisians of Italian descent. Consequently the French Government didn't any longer trust its white Africans. Those among them still allowed to obtain commissions were scattered among Metropolitan and Colonial regiments. Their efficiency was thus lost—swallowed up by a mammoth system.

Praying In War Time

How and what it can operate.

***By* W. E. Orchard**

THERE is nothing governing prayer in war time that is not operative always, save that at such a time recourse to prayer may be more widespread and general; and then the confusions which are liable to gather about the idea of prayer may accumulate, while the difficulties which beset the subject are likely to appear more insoluble. Prayer is governed by spiritual laws that are partly natural or discernible to common sense, and partly have had to be revealed to us; and it is precisely at such time as the present that they need to be known and observed. For prayer is a mighty power, the mightiest power that God has placed in the hands of men; but the attempts to exercise it in an unspiritual way or from selfish motives, since these are bound to introduce negativing conditions, only hide from us what a power it is, because false attempts to set it in motion obviously and necessarily fail.

The ultimate spiritual law governing prayer is the will of God; and to that all prayer must therefore be ultimately submitted. But although the will of God, and especially at any moment, or for some specific matter, may be unknown and seem obscure, we can be certain that the will of God is never, in our sense of the word, arbitrary, and is never anything but for the highest good of all mankind. On the other hand it is beyond doubt that we can never change the will of God, whether by prayer or any other means; it would only be disastrous to us if we could. That does not mean however that prayer can make no difference. God has willed that we should be able to obtain great benefits by making our requests known to Him. Although, to some minds, this involves the whole matter in something approaching contradiction, the solution must simply be that God has reserved a reservoir of possibilities within His eternal will which prayer can set free and appropriate; indeed that there are many benefits which, although it is God's will that we should have them, that will be only when we also will them and humbly seek them in prayer. When, therefore, our will coincides with God's, we are put into touch with the mightiest power in the world, and, if we observe the conditions laid down, we are placed in control of that power as we ourselves will to apply it. The Scriptures therefore constantly insist upon and emphasize the universal effectuality and irresistible power of prayer; it is always *whatsoever* we ask that shall be done for us; while faith even as a grain of mustard seed is declared to be sufficient to remove mountains.

It is obvious, however, that the conditions on our side must often fail to be fulfilled. We must often ask for things which it is not the will of God that we shall have, and that would seem to be the only and sufficient reason why we do not receive them. We ask amiss, we ask for low and selfish reasons, as Saint James tells us; and it is precisely in reference to wars that he makes this statement. There may, however, be other reasons why prayer is not answered. It is God's will that we should have some things, but only when the requisite conditions on our side are fulfilled. These equally determinative conditions have been clearly revealed, but they often seem forgotten; and this perhaps more often by those who ought

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to know better than by simple souls who recognize them almost intuitively. One frequently insisted condition is that there must be faith that our prayer will be answered. This faith must not, however, be thought of as a kind of self-persuaded confidence which then sets the power of prayer in motion, and in precise proportion to the faith we exercise, although we have the maxim laid down: according to your faith be it done unto you. For the idea has obtained considerable vogue in circles outside the Church (some of them very far outside) that faith is something we can exercise without reference to the will of God, indeed without actually praying at all; if we only will anything sufficiently hard we can secure it. The faith which must be exercised in prayer is, as anywhere else, first of all the acceptance of all God's revealed truth about Himself; but then, and naturally, a disposition to trust His perfect will for us. In the first meaning of faith, its content is fixed by God, Himself; in the second, it is a disposition which is capable of considerable increase. The hindering element in the lack of faith is therefore likely to be not only the misunderstanding of God's will, because His revelation is unknown or has been rejected, but the setting of limits to His power; limiting the Holy One of Israel, as the Scriptures call it. Thus prayer may fail because we do not ask for the right things for us in the will of God; its greatest power may go unusued but because we do not dare to ask great things from God; and that because they seem impossible to our narrow minds, our restricted spiritual imagination or, more likely, the low desires of our little hearts.

There are, however, other conditions revealed which also need careful consideration. One is that something may depend on the religious condition of the person who is praying; for it is the unceasing prayer of a just man that is said to be of great avail. This cannot mean that God has favorites, but that the just man prays for just things because he has a greater insight into God's will, and because of his closer union with Him he exercises more effectual power in his prayer. This mention of unceasing prayer indicates another condition, which is however sometimes misunderstood because of the way in which it is illustrated in the parable of the unjust judge; for that is often taken to mean that mere importunity will secure what less persevering petitions would not. The parable argues, as so many of Christ's parables do, from a bad human case to how infinitely better God's attitude must be; if importunity could succeed with a careless judge who could give in to a woman if she only bothered him enough, how much more will God answer His elect who cry to Him day and night. The condition that this importunity stresses is that our desires must be sincere and earnest and, therefore, on the human side this demands that we shall ask often and persevere in asking if the answer is delayed. The delay may be necessary from God's wisdom; but if that necessary delay discourages our perseverance, then it shows that we do not desire the thing deeply enough to make it wise to grant it.

There is another condition which bears upon the subject, and perhaps particularly in war time, when such vast needs are voiced; and that is that for some things there needs to be agreement with others in what we ask. This condition covers all the sanctioned prayers of our common worship, but also those prayers commended by authority at times of special need which we are urged to offer united and continuously; as we are at this present time, and by the Holy Father himself. Our Lord puts the limit of agreement, however, as low as when two of you agree as to what they shall ask. The principle deciding here must be that some things can only be granted when two agree; and therefore others only when many agree; and this because they affect many and cannot therefore be granted until a sufficient number earnestly desire them. We are told God would have spared Sodom and Gomorrah at the intercession of Abraham, if only there had been ten souls in them who would have made it safe to spare those iniquitous cities. It is this principle of many agreeing together about something to benefit many which lies behind the sometimes very crude and often tiresome attempts to secure large numbers in the "chain prayer" system which some persons endeavor to set going, both outside and inside the Catholic Church, sometimes with assurances of benefits which lack any authority or even common sense. But its misunderstanding and abuse should not confuse the clear principle that for some things many prayers and unceasing prayers alone avail.

Principles little understood

These general principles, although clearly set forth in the Scriptures, are not always well or widely enough understood, and they are often carelessly and even rebelliously broken by selfish desires. More often they are simply neglected because our desires fail to rise to the height of God's benevolence and mercy. The special application of these spiritual laws of prayer, and the importance of understanding and observing them in war time, is obvious; but one or two points may need emphasizing. It is often remarked, and cynically by unbelievers, that in war time thousands of people are praying, but generally that their dear ones may be spared in the general carnage; or what has caused disturbing reflections to many believers, that good people and high-played ecclesiastics are praying on either side for one-sided victory. There need be no question to faith that if it be God's will that a certain person shall be saved, if only his salvation is sought by

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someone praying for him, then that prayer can deflect bullets, or effect anything else, that will is necessary for his preservation; what is hidden in God's will is only whether it would be best for that soul and for His kingdom that he should be thus preserved. Nevertheless, it must lessen the possibility of many answers to such prayers, if we will the way of war, with all its surrender to chance and fortune, and then expect that certain people shall be miraculously spared its general consequences. There is nothing inherently wrong in praying for the victory of the side which we believe to be fighting for right and truth. Indeed, we have no right to fight for that for which we cannot also pray. To fight and not to pray would be to class ourselves with infidels who trust solely in their might and cunning. Nevertheless the intensification of the difficulties created by prayer in war time does contribute one of the many indications that war has reached a stage (and especially when it is between those who share a faith that leads them to pray) which shows how wrong it is, just because it leads to this confusion and contradiction of their prayers. Further, seeing in the development and indiscrimination of modern warfare, and the proved illusory effects of military victory, as well as remembering that Christians on either side are praying each for their victory, any serious minded believer, not to say educated practitioner in prayer, is bound to wonder whether prayer for military victory is according to the will of God. Even suppose some great concerted act of prayer, such as the recitation of the Rosary, was followed by some decisive victory (as the famous instance which the breviary has recently reminded us of in the defeat of the Turks in 1716) the prevailing opinion of the world today would ascribe such a victory, not to the power of prayer, but to the superior might, or strategy, or bravery of the victorious side; and so would only increase the trust in military might and further bolster up national pride, the world's greatest curses today.

What price

There will be those who have determined that there can be no just peace without a resounding victory for their side; others perhaps who would welcome any peace as better than war, because they believe however bad the peace, things could then be gained that war can never secure. Such opinions are no doubt to be found on both sides in the struggle, and they can operate to destroy the power of prayer, either because it is not in accordance with the will of God, or because there is not sufficient agreement as to what is asked for. It is difficult to understand how anyone who has prayed much or deeply can remain unconscious, as he prays at this time, of this conflict and negation of prayer.

These apparently confusing and counteracting conditions nevertheless leave a way still open, indeed compel us to take it; and surely one on which we all can agree, whatever our war hopes or poltical beliefs, whether isolationist or interventionist, for this proposes spiritual intervention: namely to ask for nothing less than the divine deliverance of humanity. This means to desire such an end to the war as would manifest to all the world that it was brought about by divine action rather than by military might or diplomatic negotiation, which men and nations would then only attribute to their power or sagacity. This desire would therefore also move us to ask that deliverance from the dreadful suffering and menace of this war should be granted not to our nation only, but to all who are thus terribly involved. It may well be that few or none of us can even conceive what kind of actual event would fulfil such conditions; but perhaps some at least can envisage what enormous benefit it would bestow on mankind if, for instance, the issue of this war proclaimed even more emphatically than the last the futility of war, and best of all if some wave of repentance moved all men to turn from the evil and plan to seek help from God for the evil they fear. Such an act would be seen if there was a simultaneous uprising of the people everywhere to call a halt to this insensate slaughter, with all the unimaginable sufferings now being inflicted not only on the fighting forces but on so many innocent, bereaved and made homeless and doomed to starvation. If the war goes on it is only likely to end in revolution and anarchy, not to mention the hopelessness and unbelief that may descend upon our world for generations. Human hopes cannot rise higher than what God's wise and merciful will holds in store for His children, if they would only turn to Him with all their hearts.

Such hopes, however, necessitate bringing another condition of prayer into clearer light. Our Lord bade us when we start praying to forgive, if we have aught against anyone; while the Our Father insists in the strongest way that prayers for our own forgiveness must be accompanied by our forgiveness of others. To pray for our enemies, as Christ commanded, might have the effect of converting them, and theirs of converting us; for we all stand in need in some degree of repentance for this evil which has descended on the whole world and threatens even greater evils in its train if it cannot be brought to an end by repentance on the part of all who need it. He who is said to turn the hearts of kings as the rivers of water are turned could at our prayer turn the hearts of rulers of this world who have any responsibility for having started or for continuing this catastrophe. Nor need any who are burning with moral indignation at the crimes that have already made this the world's worst war imag-

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ine that the repentance necessary for forgiveness means some easy pardoning and letting off of suffering. If it could be brought home to anyone responsible for deluging God's earth with human blood, turning His air and sea into areas of murder and menace, and destroying the finest monuments of civilization and the fruits of religion, repentance would entail a suffering only less than the fires of hell, bitterest purgatory could be; only that sufferings might help to the world's salvation, and not just be retribution in the world to come.

Despite all the calls to prayer, there is at present all too little indication anywhere that the tragedy of humanity and the desperate need of the world has moved the faithful, still less stirred the thoughtless masses, to turn to prayer as the only hope for mankind at this dreadful hour. We shall never pray more until we feel more deeply, and we shall never feel deeply enough until we envisage what is actually happening in the world, and understand what is possible in the will of God; and that means until sufficient numbers realize that we have brought things to a pass which it is beyond human power to help or save. Those who do feel and see, however inadequately, should not hesitate to begin to pray, or fail to persevere however dark the prospects remain. Let them urge others to do likewise; and then, first small groups, and then the Church as a whole, and at last the world, may turn and cry for forgiveness, mercy and deliverance for all. Then we may be sure God will answer, and effectually; for the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL National Congress of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine at Philadelphia, on the four days and nights from November 15 to November 19, inclusive, will be the great focus and distribution point of Catholic Action in the United States, both directly and indirectly. More than seventy members of the hierarchy from both North and South America, thousands of priests and nuns, and more than five thousand lay delegates from outside Philadelphia were in attendance at some sixty conferences, with the Apostolic Delegate of the Holy See preaching the sermon at the opening pontifical Mass in Convention Hall. Only the first day's sessions have been reported as I write, but the headlines placed above the account of the first day by the New York *Times* epitomizes the deep significance of the congress very aptly. "Move to Deepen Faith amid War," they begin, and this key-note is followed by the practical lesson conveyed in the main addresses of the first day of the congress: "Confraternity Delegates Are Told of Wider Rôle of Laity in Catholic Liturgy." The *Times,* by the way, devoted nearly three columns in its reporting of the opening sessions, an example of press co-operation with religious events that ought to be generally followed in the secular press. However valuable as the aid of secular publicity undoubtedly is in aiding the Church in our own free country to spread its message, now, as always, the Church must rely upon its own agencies chiefly, and, therefore, it is, so it seems to this lay observer, a matter of great importance and high and reasonable hope that the Church faces the present crisis in world affairs with its own interior organism and spirit functioning most strongly.

What I have in mind, on this point, and what I think is a general conviction shared by much better qualified observers of and workers in Catholic Action than the present writer, may be brought out by a reference to Church affairs in general made by the great historian Ludwig von Pastor, in his introduction to the fifteenth volume of his monumental "History of the Popes," which deals mainly with the Council of Trent. It was this council, of course, that marked the turning point of the Catholic recovery from the confusion and loss of the Reformation. This restoration of Catholic vigor was not the first occasion, by any means, when the Church had been obliged to rally itself and reorganize its methods and revitalize its system of education, because of assaults from outside and sickness and weakness inside its spiritual and moral domains. "The restoration of ecclesiastical life in the sixteenth century," says Pastor, "arose, as it had done in the days of Gregory VII, from within the Church itself, but with this difference, that the first incentive thereto was not given by the Holy See and the hierarchy, as had been the case in the eleventh century, but by various individuals inspired by God. These, clinging fast to the precious treasure of the old faith and firmly maintaining obedience to lawful and ecclesiastical authority, worked, with burning zeal and unwearying diligence, first for their own sanctification and only afterward for the radical reform of their contemporaries. It is true that their endeavors for reform could only take firm root and permeate the whole Church when the Apostolic See took them in hand, and this turn of affairs, made possible by the great Popes of the houses of Farnese and Carafa, took place under the fourth and fifth Pius."

In previous times of world crisis, as history reveals, the struggle of the Church against evils and on behalf of good for mankind had often been hampered, and partly occasioned, by deep-seated moral and sociological evil that had developed inside the Church itself, sometimes in the very highest circles. But for centuries now the story has been far otherwise. Especially is it true that during the last hundred years the papacy and the hierarchy and the great body of the clergy and the religious groups of both men and woman have been flourishing in unimpaired spiritual and moral health. This health and vigor has extended also to the *intellect* of the Church, as the great teachings of the modern Popes from Pius XI to the present Holy Father amply prove. And now it is the Holy See and the hierarchy, not volunteer pilots, who issue the call to the laity to close ranks about their inspiring leaders.

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Communications

THE WAR

Scranton, Pa.

TO the Editors: One ancient and important truism war hysteria always tends to sweep out is: There are two sides to every question—and to every quarrel. All war propaganda denies this truism, yet for negotiating the just peace which must be the end of every war it is important.

Consequently whenever one can in the mass of anti-German war writings catch an inadvertent page that puts the other side in a more plausible light one ought to underscore it heavily.

Nothing in this whole war seemed so shocking and inexplicable to me as the German assault upon their cousins the Dutch. Yet, the other day, reading "That Day Alone" by the fiery Dutch interventionist, Pierre Van Paassen, this inexplicable assault took on plausibility, if not justification.

This Dutch writer confesses unequivocally that Holland's "illusionary policy of neutrality . . . was fundamentally a mere trick to appease Adolf Hitler." Further he declares:

> In those years preceding the Second World War, Holland virtually lost its independence to the British Empire. England did not look upon Holland any longer as an independent state. Britain's frontiers were pushed eastward to the Rhine.

If Germany had pushed its frontiers through Mexico to the Rio Grande, would we in a war with Germany crash through seemingly neutral Mexico or wouldn't we? We think of Iceland!

Incidentally Van Paassen also illuminates why there were so-called fifth columnists in Holland. He says the masses had not benefited from the wealth of East India oil. "The good life in Holland?" he asks. "Yes, for the crew that sat on top." The masses never had butter, meat only on Sunday and "we had one egg each year at Eastertime." No wonder among those masses there were some who hoped more from Hitler than they had ever got from Wilhelmina!

AUSTIN J. APP.

THE FRENCH CATHOLIC CONSCIENCE

South Orange, N. J.

TO the Editors: I make reference to Mr. Herbert Morris's comments in the November 14 COMMONWEAL in reply to M. Henry-Haye's letter in the November 7 issue.

Mr. Morris states that surely no one in this country is astonished over the anxiety of French Catholics at the collaboration policy of the French Government.

How could we be astonished when our own government is collaborating equally closely with communist Russia And as for measures taken by the French Government against *Temps Nouveau* and *Esprit* for their stand against collaboration, could it be that these publications are firmer in the faith than THE COMMONWEAL?

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The Stage & Screen

Macbeth

ONCE AGAIN we are in Maurice Evans's debt for his presentation of a Shakespearean tragedy, and once again Margaret Webster displays her ability as a director. Mr. Evans's enactment of the Scottish thane is carefully thought out, and on the intellectual side admirably executed. He gives us poignantly the man's tortured soul, and he reads most of the verse with clarity and feeling. If he lacks in heroic stature and in power, if we never believe in him as a great warrior, we do believe in him intellectually, and in a sense emotionally. Macbeth is a figure almost impossible to enact to complete satisfaction, for the actor who has the animal vigor almost always lacks the intellectual requirements. Maurice Evans abundantly gives us the latter. Judith Anderson is an interesting Lady Macbeth. She too perhaps lacks a little of the indomitable, almost masculine quality which some actresses have given it, but in the womanly side, in her love passages with Macbeth, in her sleep-walking scene, above all in her depiction of the woman's breaking mind and spirit, she is superb. Her variety both of action and speech is unusual, her beauty and her dignity unique. It is in many respscts the finest thing Miss Anderson has done. There are also good performances by Herbert Rudley as Macduff, Ralph Clanton as Malcolm, and William Hansen as the Porter. In short New York as well as Mr. Evans is to be congratulated on receiving such an admirable production of Shakespeare's second greatest tragedy. *(At the National Theater.)*

Theater

THIS dramatization of Somerset Maugham's novel "Theater" by Guy Bolton and Mr. Maugham himself, is not any important addition to dramatic literature, but it is a play of excellent dialogue, possessing a story which, if slightly theatric and old-fashioned, is the sort which gives actors a chance to show what they can do. Indeed it might be wished that there were more such plays today, even though some of our dramatic reviewers might turn up their noses at them as unworthy of a sophisticated age. One thing is certain, "Theater" is the sort of theatric fare that most theater-lovers like. Indeed if the theater is to continue to appeal to the masses, if it is not to dwindle down into an esoteric art with an audience composed of a few self-styled sophisticates congregated chiefly in New York, our drama critics must begin to show themselves a little more catholic in their tastes and generous in their judgments, and be willing to say a good word for such a workmanlike play as "Theater." Of course no one could say anything derogatory of its acting. The part of the actress who feels her fascination slipping is enacted by Cornelia Otis Skinner, and she abundantly proved that *her* fascination is not slipping. Miss Skinner is beautiful, accomplished as a comedienne, possessed of rare dignity, and yet plastic in movement and varied in vocal resource. In "Theater" she ranks herself with Miss Cornell, Miss Lawrence, Miss Fontanne, Miss Anderson, Miss Hayes, Miss Clare, Miss Cowl and Miss George as one of the first ladies of the American theater. She is excellently assisted by Arthur Margetson, Viola Roaches, Frederick Bradlee and Stanley Harrison. *(At the Hudson Theater.)*

Spring Again

GRACE GEORGE is one of our most accomplished and charming mistresses of comedy, and C. Aubrey Smith, an actor of rare personality and distinguished manner. "Spring Again" is not worthy of their talents, for this tale of the son of a Civil War general who spends his whole life dedicating statues to his father is decidedly dull. Moreover Mr. Smith should have appeared as the general himself rather than as his futile son. Mr. Smith's whole personality cried out against this waste. And Miss George, delightful as she is always, cannot make bricks without straw. But at least the play was acted and directed as we have come to expect Guthrie McClintic's plays to be. *(At Henry Miller's Theater.)*

GRENVILLE VERNON.

People's Cherce

THIS WEEK'S cinema program goes in for variety: a grim little melodrama about Georgia backwoodsmen; another "Thin Man" mystery; a colorful musical; a spy thriller.

Jean Renoir seems to have had better luck than his other compatriots who recently came to this country to direct films. Perhaps one reason why the direction in *"Swamp Water"* is so good is that Renoir didn't have a castfull of million dollar stars to get in his hair. A more obvious reason is that Renoir knows his business. Using Dudley Nichols's simple, sincere script (written from Vereen Bell's story) and a fine cast who share equally in the honors, Renoir made this moving and realistic film about a group of untutored folk living on the edge of a dismal swamp in Georgia as if he wanted to show how "Tobacco Road" should have been done. "Swamp Water" is not for sensitive audiences; its melodramatic story and natural photography of the infested swamp forbidding with unexplored vastness, gloom, snakes, suckholes, bull alligators and other grasping horrors keep one nervously on the edge of his chair. Irving Pichel's production has an authentic background; much of the picture was actually filmed at Okenfenokee Swamp in Georgia. The number of pretty girls detracts somewhat from the picture's realism, but, under Renoir's guidance, Dana Andrews, Walter Brennan, Anne Baxter, Walter Huston, Virginia Gilmore, Mary Howard, John Carradine, Ward Bond turn in performances that are beautifully in keeping with the spirit of the harrowing tale.

Then for relaxation there are Nick and Nora Charles who are now sleuthing their way through a new story by Harry Kurnitz. Irving Brecher and Kurnitz, who wrote the script, and W. S. Van Dyke, who directed *"Shadow of the Thin Man,"* depend a little too much on the established reputation of these Dashiell Hammett characters.

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Perhaps we are a bit weary of the series for this newest item doesn't seem to come up to the others. Or perhaps the humor strains too hard at sophistication and talks too much about the famous detective and his love for downing cocktails and solving complicated crimes instead of letting him get into action. When the jockey who threw yesterday's race is murdered, naturally Nick is going to ferret around till he finds the murderer. He is helped, and hindered, by his wife and Asta, that clever wire-haired beast. Sam Levene, Stella Adler, Henry O'Neill and Alan Baxter assist William Powell and Myrna Loy through the fun and murders. By the time Powell gathers all the suspects in one room for the dénouement you have a pretty good idea yourself who dun it.

"Week-End in Havana" may not send you running to your favorite travel agency but it does have good Cuban sight-seeing shots in exciting technicolor and a carefree, vacation-gay lightness that will stir the gypsy in you. Furthermore it is certainly the best of the recent crop of musicals designed to sell good neighborliness. Our heroine, a hosiery salesgirl from Macy's (Alice Faye waving her hands around as if she were about to holler for the floorwalker), refuses to sign a release when her ship runs aground. She skimped for this vacation for ages and she's going to have a good time in Havana if it's the last thing she does. So the ship's representative (handsome John Payne) sees to it that she does have a good time—even if he has to hire a romantic gigolo (smiling, rhumbaing Cesar Romero) to carry on. But it's Carmen Miranda, flashing her eyes, fingertips and hips, who puts the real zip into the film. Director Walter Lang didn't have an uproarious screenplay to deal with, so whenever the story got too pokey, he quickly put Carmen to work with some good song and dance numbers that should wake up any audience.

An exciting spy film is always welcome. *"International Lady"* may not be the best of spy thrillers, but it has its moments. It will remind you somewhat of "Foreign Correspondent," with its intrigue, diplomacy and chasing from place to place. The principals spy on each other in London, Lisbon, New York and Long Island; it will particularly remind you of that film in its big climax in a deserted granary tense with hushed expectation as George Brent crawls around the building to peek in while poor old Basil Rathbone almost suffocates in flax. It is also reminiscent of that old Marlene Dietrich item in which the code was conveyed by music. "International Lady" has pretty, blonde Ilona Massey to play and sing the musical code—and in good voice she does it. FBIman Brent and Scotland Yard's Rathbone compete for Miss Massey's heart—and head too, for she is a German spy through whom the boys hope to capture bigger game, the saboteurs who are downing American planes bound for England. And there is just enough propaganda to tease Senator Nye. Howard Estabrook's screenplay, which Tim Whelan directed, bogs down occasionally with too much conversation, intrigue and counter-espionage. All the English talk very, very English, and the Americans in slangy American. But if the whole is accepted in its own spirit of adventure, it provides more than passable entertainment.

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In the issue of December 12, week after next, THE COMMONWEAL will present a constructive survey of the current Theatre and Cinema. A leading theatrical producer, a leader of the Catholic theatre movement and THE COMMONWEAL's critics, Grenville Vernon and Philip Hartung, will contribute this timely and highly readable material.

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Books of Week

Three Novels

All That Glitters. Frances Parkinson Keyes. Messner. $2.75.

THE FRAMEWORK of this long and readable novel is Washington, D. C., Paris, Mexico City, and the international scene of the past 15 years. It is peopled with senators, diplomats, newspapermen, débutantes and dowagers. From time to time leading characters keep the story straight by commenting with no great acumen on the current headlines. But "All That Glitters" is not at all a political novel. Similar to the author's previous best-sellers, it concerns itself primarily with people rather than with ideas or environment. It is a study of individual loves and misunderstandings, of family and marriage. Particularly of marriage. The domestic scenes are far more important than the numerous social functions.

Indeed designation of the subject can be further limited, for the book is really focused on the problem of woman's happiness. How can love and marriage bring fulfillment? The formerly heedless Veronique, refined in the fire of deprivation and self-sacrifice, serves as a contrast to the insidious but fading Isabel who abandoned an ailing husband for dalliance in the international smart set; to the fair Helen (the one heroine who seldom comes to life), who took so long to follow the dictates of her heart; to the flaming-haired Zoe, a demon as a reporter but long fearful of marriage and the bearing of children. That is the theme of the book. The author's interest, her province here is the heart of woman. This her latest resembles such previous successes as "Fielding's Folly" and the "Great Tradition." Scattered here and there in her warm narrative are a few brief touches reminiscent of her popular sketches of Saint Teresa of Lisieux, Saint Bernadette, and Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Mrs. Keyes manifests all the skill of a born narrator to carry her heroines and the numerous male members of the cast through years of hope and disillusionment, sacrifice and deep satisfaction. It is difficult not to share her interest in her characters, hard not to keep on reading to discover how things turn out for them. "All That Glitters" is that kind of a novel. EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

The Empty Room. Charles Morgan. Macmillan. $2.00.

"YOU HAVE to be reborn. Perhaps nations can be because the old generation dies and a new generation is bred and grows up." That statement made by Henry Rydal to Richard Crannock in this new Charles Morgan novel is the key to the book. This is England during the first year of the war. Dr. Crannock, a survivor of the last war, depressed by the gloomy world outlook, puts aside his practice to do secret work on precision instruments; he realizes that for the second time his life is being plucked from him. This war is extraordinarily like the last: "People wasting the same time and talking much the same nonsense. The same jokes, the same optimism. . . . ." But this war *is* different. Last time one believed in a bright future peace. This time one doesn't look forward. The past has been disintegrated. One cannot see the end.

Crannock, billeted at Rydal's house, falls in love with Rydal's daughter and is stirred by the mystery that pervades the house. To divulge the story of the empty room and its former mistress would not be fair to the author, who tells his tale exceedingly well as he slowly leads the interested reader to the finale in which, through love and the continuity of life, evil and fear are dispelled and rebirth is effected. Neither is the jacket's blurb which suggests a comparison with "The Turn of the Screw" quite fair to Mr. Morgan. If there is any likeness to the James book it is in the evil influence that disturbs the characters in "The Empty Room," in Mr. Morgan's deliberately obscure and guarded prose (not once but several times even the characters fail to understand each other's enigmatic answers), and in the shortness of this well constructed, compact, 160-page novelette. But the careful reader (and only careful readers have the time or interest to bother with Charles Morgan's difficult style) will enjoy the analogy in this story of regeneration of individuals and the author's faith in the promise of rebirth and growth of nations after "this insane and persistent ruin of civilization." "There aren't any rewards from a modern victory for the generation that won it. There aren't any rewards at all except a chance to replant." PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Ellen Rogers. James T. Farrell. Vanguard. $2.50.

THIS IS a somewhat fantastic love story involving "beyond good and evil" as it works out in the lives of Ellen Rogers and Ed Lanson. Ed is a street fighter, confidence man and parasite, restlessly moving about in search of unalloyed pleasure. His methods are wholly conscienceless. The circumstance that he does not develop as a murderer, tenement house firebug or gangster is strictly accidental. Something of this kind is perhaps reserved for him at another time. A moral imbecile in the purest form, how he got that way is not shown. You meet him fully developed and watch him artfully gaining money, shelter, ideas, friendship and love with no plan save to take everything in sight and give nothing in return. Imagination and intelligence added to physical attractiveness make him honied in the eyes of Ellen Rogers. Idle, corrupt and beautiful Ellen experiences Ed's unprincipled courtship "love" and scorn. Her most desperate efforts to retain him are futile in the nature of the case. Ed is too slippery. His absolute irresponsibility brings loss and suffering to everyone he meets. Ellen Rogers was bad to begin with, but even she had the potentialities for a moral existence. Ed destroyed them. Colonies of misanthropes naturally form around the Ed Lansons of this world.

This story is a departure from the spirit of Farrell's former themes. If he wrote this book to show his critics he has subject matter outside the lives of the Lonigans he has succeeded. He succeeds also in showing that there is a Chicago version of the Lilliom and Pal Joey type. I would say to my friends about this story take it or leave it, but I recommend that you leave it unless you are a student of philosophy in which event you may enjoy seeing what ideas look like under the stairway.

JAMES N. VAUGHAN.

BIOGRAPHY

Their Name Is Pius. Lillian Browne-Olf. Bruce. $3.00.

ONE MAY FIND much useful information and even comfort in the story Mrs. Browne-Olf tells. For she shows the Bark of Peter moving through the worst storms it has encountered in two centuries, up to the last and worst of all. Moreover, she reminds us that the six Popes Pius (VI to XI), to whom such difficult steer-

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ing fell, triumphed wonderfully in spirit and even in tangible success, despite the fact that they could give way temporarily to human weakness, or show their fallibility of judgment in political affairs. What impresses one most of all in this greatness is the greatness of their humility. "We have sinned against conscience," cried the aged, weary and imprisoned Pius VII, after signing the Concordant of 1812 with the French dictator whom he had excommunicated three years before. And his retraction of his consent, modeled on that addressed by Paschal II to the Emperor Henry V, deserves Mrs. Browne-Olf's adjective of "glorious." Blessed be God, who . . . has willed to humble Us by a salutary confusion . . . at the same time . . . giving Us the necessary assistance for the acceptance of this humiliation for the good of Our soul." No wonder the Catholic revival of the early nineteenth century advanced rapidly in this Pope's closing years.

What made the position of Popes Pius VI to IX so difficult was that they were temporal sovereigns over a large state which was of interest to all Europe—temporal sovereigns sometimes called on to declare war, at others to reform their government on the principles so much cherished in English-speaking countries and admired elsewhere. It was much easier to dissociate the Pope's spiritual from his temporal power in theory than in practice. For example, Pius VII explained that, being Pope, he could not, as Prince, engage in the Napoleonic struggle. His position, as Mrs. Browne-Olf explains it, was that "only the necessity of defending imperiled religion against hostile aggression had ever justified his predecessors in departing from a state of peace." Pius IX took the same position when he directed that his army should not leave his territories in order to give the King of Piedmont help in 1848; but he had much sympathy for the advocates of Italian liberation and unification (a sympathy hardly referred to in this book), and watched thousands of his troops take the road for Piedmont as volunteers without reproof, if not with some complacency. With respect to internal reform these Popes of the earlier nineteenth century were in a dilemma still more serious. They found it impracticable to establish parliamentary government in their states, and hand over the controlling power in administration to laymen; yet, thanks to the atmosphere which prevailed in Italy after 1830, their refusal to do this made unrest endemic in their principality. All men know the tragedy which attended Pius IX's efforts to cut this Gordian knot. Because the temporal power in its historic sense was destroyed in 1870, Pius X enjoyed a comparatively peaceful pontificate, of great richness in its contributions to the Church's inner life; while Pius XI, determining "not to perpetuate the superstitions of territorial integrity," solved the dilemma which had so troubled his predecessors in the nineteenth century.

Thanks to her great industry and enthusiasm for her subject, Mrs. Browne-Olf gives us lively reading and many extracts from papal writings and speeches not easily otherwise accessible. But she writes as a fervent apologist, who has not given much time to the study or understanding of history. For example, she apparently relies for information about Europe in revolutionary and Napoleonic times upon the notoriously biased and inaccurate account which Sir Archibald Alison produced a century ago, and which few find it worth while even to remember nowadays. Unfortunately, too, Alison's Toryism, reinforced by an apparent failure on her own part to distinguish between anti-Christian and Christian liberalism, seems to have made her antagonistic to the development in Europe of the ideas and institutions which she finds admirable in America. As for the book's accuracy, one could make quite a catalogue of statements contrary to established facts, of curious omissions, of hasty and prejudiced conclusions, of carelessness regarding names. But if one can and must point out that the book is sadly deficient in accuracy, in detachment and in appreciation of the course of nineteenth century history, one is glad to emphasize that it fulfils its main purpose by bringing us closer to the lives and minds and lips of six Pontiffs from whom we may glean guidance and comfort in these dark and darkening days. H. C. F. BELL.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Twelve Million Black Voices. Richard Wright. Photo-Direction by Edwin Rosskam. Viking. $3.00.

MR. RICHARD WRIGHT has written a strictly Marxian text to Mr. Edwin Rosskam's photographs, but the book belongs in the library of every student of American life. There is no need to say that this book is propaganda, for it is. But what is not? And why should we not have a good propaganda, after four centuries of vicious propaganda to make life easy for white folk who have bled and exploited black folk?

So far as this Marxian angle is concerned, I think the worst part comes in the foreword, where Mr. Wright speaks words that seem to me, related to Toussaint L'Ouverture and the black slaughter of whites and mulattoes in Haiti that marked the first sharp break between the New World and the Old. I am sensitive about mulattoes, although I am not a mulatto; just a plain light-skinned Negro of legally married light-skinned Negro parentage. My sensitivity grows out of the conviction that the communists and many other forces that want to use black shock troops in the future, the not too distant future, are inclined to separate if possible, blacks from near whites, in the US just as in the West Indies.

Inasmuch as Mr. Wright "intentionally does not include in its considerations those areas of Negro life which comprise the so-called 'talented tenth,' or the islands of mulatto leadership which are still to be found in many parts of the South," the business groups, etc., which he styles a "liaison corps" between whites and blacks, I am moved to join once more the ranks of Mr. Wright's critics.

Hence, I am thrown into the laps of the intelligent Catholics who believe that it is just as stupid to preach separatism among the heterogeneous peoples who comprise the American Negro as it is to preach separatism among the Americans, generally. I hope that this book-note makes my own propaganda clear; that those forces which tend to over-emphasize the *color* of the colored people from our backward rural South are missing the bus as completely as any Chamberlain in world history.

That leads me to formulate a "line" for all our radical social scientists. (1) Work to liberate the oppressed, regardless of color. (2) Help black people feel that they too, are children of the Creator without turning them against the two-thirds of the colored population who are not exactly black. Since their not being black is scarcely the result of a plot on their part, we must fight efforts of Mr. Wright and his followers to make American "Eurasians" out of us.

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Other than this, we have a good book to hand to our policy formers. If nothing more, these photographs give us the fruits of human ignorance and disease—things that are not solved by political action alone. GEORGE STREATOR.

SCIENCE

Scientific Aspects of the Race Problem. H. S. Jennings, C. A. Berger, S.J., T. V. Moore, O.S.B., A. Hrdlička, R. H. Lowie, O. Klineberg. With a preface by Bishop Corrigan. The Catholic University and Longmans. $3.00.

AT THE invitation of the Catholic University this group of distinguished scientists has contributed an authoritative and fundamental work on race. The spirit of the volume is expressed in a couple of sentences taken from one of the authors of this symposium: "It will not do to strive for a cheap victory by exposing the absurdities of the extremists. Complex problems cannot be reduced to an 'all or nothing' formula." It is of primary practical importance for us in America, where the race problem is ever-present and rapidly growing, to discriminate between the scientific racial realities and the older and newer distortions thereof. Here are the scientific realities soberly and dispassionately set down.

Each of the contributors to this symposium has written a chapter in which he summarizes for the layman the findings to date of the particular discipline in which he is a specialist. Basic to the understanding of race is a knowledge of heredity. The first chapter is a review of Jennings of the law of heredity and of present knowledge of human genetics, with particular reference to the physical characteristics of man. Next the bearing of heredity upon psychological characteristics, especially emotional traits and intellectual and moral qualities, is treated by Berger.

Chapter III by Moore is a study of the comparative mentality of man and the anthropoids, which reveals the fundamentally like rationality of all the human races. He summarizes and evaluates the vast amount of experimental work that has been done, especially in the last five years, and draws the line definitively between human and animal intelligence. In chapter IV, "The Races of Man," Hrdlička clarifies the concept of race and classifies the races of man according to his well known system.

What science knows of comparative racial mentality as revealed through culture and through mental testing is presented in the last two chapters of the book, by Lowie and Klineberg respectively. Lowie throws new light on the factors underlying differences in cultural achievement and morality. His fresh and original discussion of the comparative incidence of genius is worthy of special note, even in a work such as the present, the general level of which is so high. In the final chapter, "Mental Testing of Racial and National Groupings," Klineberg brings out the predominant contribution by non-racial, cultural factors, such as motivation, language difficulties and amount of schooling, to the gross scores obtained in mental testing as well as in the measurement of personality.

It is obviously impossible within the limits of a brief review to do more than indicate the structure and rich content of the volume. Three disciplines—genetics, psychology and anthropology—sometimes looked upon as remote from life, here by pooling their resources make a significant practical contribution to the public weal. All interested in the race problem and its bearing on the public weal will find this brilliant symposium eminently worthwhile reading. REGINA FLANNERY.

In the Groove

ONCE MORE Columbia pioneers in giving us important music which we are not likely to hear in the concert hall. This time it is *Pierrot Lunaire,* Arnold Schönberg's early work (1912) in *Sprechstimme,* a sort of speech in musical notation, accompanied by five musicians doubling on eight instruments. The speech is by Erika Stiedry-Wagner, the musicians led by the composer. Important music but not, to me, likable. The 21 poems (by Albert Giraud) are decadent and moonstruck and Schönberg's bloodless sounds, foreshadowing his adoption of atonalism, seem to carry the germs of all that has since infected advance-guard music. The performance as such is excellent (Columbia, eight sides).

Before Schönberg let the bars down, there died in 1911 the last great symphonist in the great Central European tradition, Gustav Mahler. His later works show the signs of the times, but his *First Symphony,* now come to discs for the first time, is youthful, exuberant, well worth hearing by those whom his name may frighten. Among other things it contains a piquant funeral march on the subject *Frère Jacques.* Dimitri Mitropoulos, who has made this symphony one of his specialties, conducts the Minneapolis Symphony in its fine recording (Columbia, twelve sides).

Dimitri Shostakovitch, the brillient young Soviet composer, is represented by a new recording of his zestful, melodious *First Symphony,* by Artur Rodzinski and the Cleveland Orchestra (Columbia, eight sides). A good performance, and mechanically superior to Victor's earlier one by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra. There are other new Russian recordings, especially of the darling of Tin Pan Alley, Tchaikovsky. Both Eugene Ormandy with the Philadelphians, and Sir Thomas Beecham with the London Philharmonic (each ten sides, respectively Victor and Columbia), have played the familiar *Fifth Symphony.* I prefer Beecham, one of the first rank recording conductors, for his restrained, patrician treatment. Tchaikovsky's *Concerto in B Flat Minor,* at present the basis of numerous popular band records (*Tonight We Love, Concerto for Two,* etc.), is brilliantly done (Victor, eight sides) by Vladimir Horowitz, with a kinetic accompaniment by his father-in-law, Arturo Toscanini, and the NBC Symphony. For all its showy qualities, however, the concerto is getting shopworn. In a new recording of Prokofieff's charming fairy tale, *Peter and the Wolf,* Leopold Stokowski and his All-American Orchestra (formerly All-American Youth Orchestra) go in for considerable distortion, opulent as it may sound. The narration is by Basil Rathbone, whose matter-of-factness I like less than Richard Hale's pompous enunciation in the earlier Boston Symphony version. Stokowski's is a six-side Columbia album. Rachmaninoff's *Suite No. 2* for two pianos is unimportant salon stuff, well played by Vronsky and Babin for Victor (six sides).

Victor's *Heart of the Piano Concerto* carries on an idea, commercially sound but otherwise thoroughly meretricious, which was begun last year with *Heart of the Symphony.* It presents hit tunes, rudely hacked from the most familiar concertos of Beethoven, Grieg, Schumann, etc., plus a snatch of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue.* Played so-so by Jesus Maria Sanroma and the Victor Symphony conducted by Charles O'Connell (eight sides). By way of amends, Victor presents two honest concertos,

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both finely done: Mozart's for the horn (No. 3 in E flat), by Aubrey Brain, a virtuoso on this difficult instrument, with the BBC Symphony and Sir Adrian Boult (four sides); and the sturdy, beautiful Brahms *Double Concerto,* by Jascha Heifetz, violinist, Emanuel Feuermann, cellist, with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Ormandy (eight sides).

Bach's monumental *Art of Fugue,* a set of fourteen increasingly complex fugues built upon a single subject, is recorded on Harvard University's baroque organ by E. Power Biggs (Victor, twenty sides in two volumes). The fugues, which were Bach's last works and for which he designated no particular instrument, are interesting, often powerful, but difficult to absorb all at once. Biggs plays them rather pedantically. Easier to apprehend, and in fact completely lovely, is Bach's *Partita No.* 5, a set of keyboard pieces recorded on the piano by Walter Gieseking (Columbia, four sides). Also agreeable, and brilliantly played, is the ballet suite *The Wise Virgins,* arranged from Bach chorales and cantata numbers by William Walton, with the Sadler's Wells Orchestra under his baton (Victor, four sides).

The last of Mozart's four greatest operas to reach the discs complete is *Cosi fan tutte* ("So Do They All"), performed by England's fine (pre-War) Glyndebourne Festival Opera Company with Fritz Busch conducting (Victor, 40 sides in three volumes). A matchless performance of a masterly musical tribute to rococo love. Among the singers are John Brownlee of the Metropolitan Opera, and Ina Souez, who sang the difficult leading soprano rôle in recent performances of the New Opera Company. Mozart's wit, insight and human warmth are easier to sense by listening to these records and following the libretto than by watching *Cosi fan tutte* on the stage, where its plot absurdities seem to defy the most experienced directors.

Mozart's *Serenade No.* 11, for a pair of oboes, clarinets, horns and bassoons, is not strictly top-drawer Mozart—but for many people, myself included, any Mozart is good enough. It is played adequately by eight members of the Alumni Orchestra of the National Orchestral Association (a sort of training ground for musicians), under the direction of Richard Korn (Victor, six sides). For all that has been written about Ravel's *La Valse,* with its tragic and ironic implications, I find it an irritating piece in its perverse scratchings at the simple form of the Viennese waltz. It has been given an excellent new recording by Pierre Monteux and the San Francisco Symphony (Victor, three sides); better, I understand, than the current recording by John Barbirolli and the New York Philharmonic Symphony (Columbia, three sides). Georges Enesco's *Rumanian Rhapsodies No.* 1 *and No.* 2 and Zoltan Kodaly's *Dances from Galanta* make an interesting group; the latter are Hungarian and each piece whirls along in a brightly-colored gypsy way. Victor has recorded them well, the Rumanian dances by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and Hans Kindler and the National Symphony (four sides); the Hungarian work by Arthur Fiedler and the Boston "Pops" Orchestra (four sides).

Lily Pons does her best recording yet in one of her most charming röles, *The Daughter of the Regiment,* from which four of Donizetti's sparkling arias are presented in a Columbia set (four sides). Skip the *Suite* from Deems Taylor's *Peter Ibbetson,* played by Howard Barlow and the CB Symphony (Columbia, four sides); derivative and

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commonplace music. Strauss's *Don Juan*, a surging, Lisztian tone poem, is played with great vitality by Fritz Reiner and the Pittsburgh Symphony (Columbia, four sides). One of the last great Beethoven Quartets, *Opus 130 in B Flat,* is recommended not only to chamber music fanciers but to anyone seeking familiarity with the Beethoven of mystic utterance; well played by the Busch Quartet (Columbia, ten sides). Finally, the *Fourth Symphony* of Schumann, one of his most integrated yet genial and romantic works, in a warm, mellow recording by Frederick Stock and the Chicago Symphony (Columbia, six sides).

The foregoing mention of two months' releases (result of speedier shipments by the two companies) leaves me without space for discussion of single discs or popular records. As for the latter, they have been poor—poor indeed, sterile in invention, ground out according to formula, presumably for the juke-boxes which account for sixty per cent of record sales. More of that next month, along with the remaining single discs. Herewith some popular albums, although this type of offering has fallen off too, not only in quality but for some reason in quantity. Victor has an item which may provide nostalgia for some of us, songs by the pioneer crooner Russ Columbo, who met a tragic death a few years back (eight sides). Avoid Columbia's *Is Everybody Happy*, unless you admire Ted Lewis and his clarinet—re-pressed from the days when he was groping unsuccessfully toward some sort of jazz style (eight sides). *Flamenco Music* is an excellent collection (Musicraft) featuring a Spanish guitarist, Villarino, who has been heard in New York night clubs. Musicraft's *English Folk Songs and Ballads,* by a rather anemic-voiced Englishman named G. Marston Haddock, is less interesting. A fine set, in the same vein, is that of *Richard Dyer Bennet, Lute Singer* (General album). He covers several centuries of song, his light voice backed by the guitar-like twangs of a Swedish lute. General's *Sod Buster Ballads* and *Deep Sea Chanteys* are fine Americana, both sung by a vagrant group who call themselves the Almanac Singers. Another new youth orchestra, this time in popular vein: Raymond Paige's Young Americans, who make their bow in a Victor set called *From the Golden Pages of Memory*. These inflated arrangements of familiar numbers are as pretentious as the title sounds.

C. J. BALLIETT, JR.

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